



# Coping with Loneliness

Rev Annie Gray  
Anglican Chaplain

From Newcastle. **For the world.**

**'God designed and created us to  
desire and need companionship,  
friendship and fellowship'**

# When we're lonely...

When we're lonely, we just want it to go away but in this time of pandemic that may not be so easy.

The Bible can help us how to experience less loneliness - regardless of our situation and show us how to have joy and success in life and in our relationships in spite of being lonely.

Let's look at some specific biblical principles that can help us cope with loneliness.

### **God designed and created us to desire and need companionship, friendship and fellowship.**

*Ecclesiastes 4:9-12*

*Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.*

*Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone?*

*Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.*

*A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.*

The implication is that two people are much stronger together, God designed us to want companionship, friendship and fulfilment in loving others.

To feel alone and unloved hurts and these feelings are natural, there is nothing wrong with you for having these feelings.

We want to help you to know how to cope with feelings of loneliness as long as that continues.

Plus we want you to know what God will do to help you and what you can do for yourself—how you can reach out to others to build relationships.

# God understands your loneliness

God created us with all our emotions, so must understand us. Jesus experienced loneliness in many forms:

- The loneliness of leadership
- The loneliness of betrayal by one of his disciples
- The loneliness of feeling abandoned by his nearest disciples and God as he died on the cross

Hebrews 14:15 *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathise with our weaknesses.*

Matthew 27:46 *"And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"*

Jesus Christ has experienced every human emotion, and He knows what it's like to be lonely.

Talk to Him about it!

# It is God's plan for us to have strong family relationships

Families are the natural place for us to have personal relationships with others and to know we are not alone.

If you have family, be sure you connect and contribute to their happiness and peace, even if you have grown apart.

Many of us have dysfunctional families, but if we love them unconditionally, which is NOT the same as allowing bad or abusive behaviour to go unchecked! But by trying to fulfil the needs of other family members, we often can improve the situation.

**Philippians 2:4 "not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others."**

An example is a student with an alcoholic parent who if when phoning home, found the parent becoming abusive simply said, "I love you but I am not going to allow you to speak to me this way and am going to hang up now". It only took twice for this approach to change the parents' behavior.

What needs do you think were being filled by this approach?

# Even if we don't have a physical family, we can depend on God

God says He *"sets the solitary in families"* (Psalm 68:6).

*His Church can be a spiritual family a hundred times larger than a physical family* (Mark 10:29-30).

God tells His Church to *"consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together"* (Hebrews 10:24-25).

Above all, we can develop a close relationship with our Heavenly Father and our Elder Brother, Jesus Christ.



# If I live alone, how can God help me feel better?

If you are alone, put your trust in God.

Talk to Him about your loneliness.

Let Him know what your heart desires.

Jesus Christ promises, that whatever we ask in His name, according to His will, He will give to us.

Nothing is impossible for God.

John 14:14 *"You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it".*

1 John 5:14 *"This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us."*

Mark 10:27 *Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God."*

# I have been lonely for so long. Why isn't God helping me?

Sometimes God requires us to build character in ways we would not have chosen for ourselves.

Coping with loneliness may be one of those ways God is allowing your character to be tested. Can we learn to be content with the blessings God has given us?

Will we really believe God is with us and that we have not been left truly alone?

Realising that God will never leave us can be much needed encouragement when we feel abandoned by others.

When we try to draw near to God, we can be assured that He will draw near to us.

Hebrews 13:5 "*...be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."*

James 4:8 "*Come near to God and he will come near to you*".

Isaiah 41:10 "*Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand*".

# Loneliness can lead to anxiety and worry. What can help me?

Worry, fear and anxiety are emotions that can feel as though they are destroying us and reinforce feelings of isolation and loneliness.

God is a loving God who promises to take care of us and love us as the very best parents love.

Learn to trust Him to take care of every need. If He takes care of the little sparrows how much more will he care for us?

*Luke 12:6-7 "Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows".*

*Psalms 23:4-6 "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever"..*

# What can I do to help myself, as well as trusting in God?

Action is needed on our part, even when we have learnt to trust God and expect Him to answer our prayers, and find that He does comfort us in times of loneliness. We are called to love others as God loves us and this may mean reaching out to others to befriend and encourage them.

The Bible shows we should be aware of and provide for the needs of others in addition to our own. We should try to live the life God intended for us, trying to keep His commandments as best we can and saying sorry when we fail.

John 14:21 *"Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them."*

James 2:26 *"As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead".*

Philippians 2:4 *"not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others".*

READ ACTS 9:36-41 The story of Dorcas, does it speak to you about helping others?

### Actions to take that may help

Try to direct your thinking outward to others rather than thinking excessively about self.

Be as friendly as you can and don't forget to smile and laugh! Positive actions and emotions are contagious and will encourage others to want to be around you.

Learn new things. Develop a new hobby. Expand your interests. Engage in conversations with others about current events and common interests even though that may have to be on line at the moment.

Create a circle of friends that you talk to on the phone. Include people who may also be in lonely situations. Make it your mission to help them. Find out from volunteer organisations or your church about housebound people who would value a phone call and some encouragement

Remember every day you can help brighten up someone else's day no matter how lonely you feel. Don't forget to ask God for His spirit of love and joy to help you in all this.

The Chaplaincy service can help you locate a suitable place of worship.

# But I still feel despair and hopelessness. What's the use?

Loneliness is a condition that we must deal with, or it may lead to depression.

You do not have to cope alone, please ask for help, as God gives comfort and healing in many ways, through scripture, through His Spirit, through intervention in our lives, through directing us to people who can help.

Psalm 147:3 *"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds".*

Psalm 94:19 *"In the multitude of my anxieties within me, Your comforts delight my soul".*

**HELP IS AVAILABLE FROM THE CHAPLAINCY  
SERVICE & STUDENT HEALTH AND  
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